

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Guilford Court House Battlefield

Other Name/Site Number: Guilford Courthouse National Military Park

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 2332 New Garden Road

Not for publication: X

City/Town: Greensboro

Vicinity: _____

State: NC County: Guilford Code: 081

Zip Code: 27410

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X
Public-local: X
Public-State:
Public-Federal: X

Category of Property

Building(s):
District: X
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1
2
1
4

Noncontributing

32 buildings
sites
8 structures
28 objects
68 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 2

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register _____

___ Determined eligible for the _____
National Register

___ Determined not eligible for the _____
National Register

___ Removed from the National Register _____

___ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	Defense	Sub:	Battle Site
Current:	Landscape Domestic	Sub:	Park Single Dwelling

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: **Colonial Vernacular**

MATERIALS:

Foundation: **Field Stone**
Walls: **Logs**
Roof: **Cedar Shake**
Other: **N/A**

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 4

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**Introduction**

The Guilford Court House¹ Battlefield is located six miles northwest of downtown Greensboro, North Carolina, off of U. S. 220. The intersection of New Garden and Old Battleground Roads approximates the battlefield's geographic center (see Figure 1). Presently, the remains of the battlefield include most of the positions held by the first and second American lines, as well as about one-third of the ground occupied by the third American line. In addition to these features, the area also contains one building contemporary with the battle (Hoskins House), a portion of the ground that the British army used as a staging area, a section of historic New Garden Road, and the Guilford Court House/Martinville archeological site. Although modern development has encroached upon the battlefield, its core (i.e., the 220 acres encompassed by Guilford Courthouse National Military Park) and five contiguous areas have been excellently preserved.

Environmental Setting

The site of the Guilford Court House Battlefield currently exists within a rapidly developing suburban environment. However, at the time of the engagement, fought on 15 March 1781, the bucolic, backcountry community surrounding the Court House supported fewer than fifty inhabitants.² A contemporary account of the battle, appearing in the British *Annual Register of 1781*, described this area as “a wilderness, covered with a tall woods, which were rendered intricate by shrubs and thick underbrush; but which was interspersed here and there, by a few scattered plantations and cleared fields.”³ Most of these details, along with other notable topographical features, are well defined on the map that British Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton included in his 1787 *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781* (see Figure 2). This map, generally known as the “Tarleton map”, has the distinction of being the first published plan of the Battle of Guilford Court House.⁴ In the late 1930s, William P. Brandon, a former Historian at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, conducted a comparative study of the Tarleton map in relation to existing topography. On completion, Brandon declared the map “surprisingly accurate in most details” with the exception of the north indicator, which he concluded should be turned left about 50° for proper orientation.⁵

¹ As one historian has observed, “[a]ll eighteenth and nineteenth[-century] sources spell the name of this engagement as “Guilford Court House”. The 1917 Act of Congress that created Guilford Courthouse National Military Park modernized the spelling and “Court House” became “Courthouse.” See Thomas E. Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion: An Administrative History of Guilford Courthouse National Military Park* (National Park Service, 1995), n1.

² Charles Hatch, *Guilford Courthouse and Its Environs* (U. S. Department of the Interior: National Park Service, 1970), 4; hereafter cited as *Environs*.

³ Quoted in Hatch, *Environs*, 60.

⁴ Thomas E. Baker, the leading scholar on the Battle of Guilford Court House, convincingly argues that whoever rendered the so-called “Tarleton map” based it on the “Battle of Guildford,” a map executed immediately after the battle by a British engineer (see Figure 3). Cornwallis must have forwarded the original map along with his official report to Sir Henry Clinton, as it was discovered in the latter's papers. The Tarleton map, while more polished, is virtually identical to the 1781 prototype, down to the idiosyncratic spelling of “Guildford”. Although the 1781 map's authorship is unknown, Baker attributes it to Lieutenant Henry Haldane, a British engineer officer on Cornwallis' staff. (Thomas E. Baker, Park Ranger, Guilford Court House National Military Park, personal communicant.) The original 1781 map resides in the collections of the Clements Library at the University of Michigan.

⁵ William P. Brandon, “The Tarleton Map of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse: A Critical Study” (unpublished manuscript, in File A-11 at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, 1938), 2, 27. Brandon's contention, that the Tarleton map's north indicator must be turned to the left, seems incontrovertible; yet his estimate of 50 degrees may be problematic. In arriving at this number, Brandon used the location traditionally designated as the Court House site, presently tour stop 5 at GCNMP, as a fixed or given point; however the site of Guilford Court House has yet to be conclusively determined (see section on Archeological Investigations).

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 5**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Following the Battle of Guilford Court House, British General Lord Charles Cornwallis provided a concise description of the battlefield's topography in his official report. Cornwallis wrote:

We found the rebel army posted on rising grounds about a mile and a half from the court house...Immediately between the head of the column and the enemy's line was a considerable plantation, one large field of which was on our left of the road [sic], and two others, with a wood of about two hundred yards broad, between them on our right of it; beyond these fields the wood continued for several miles to our right. The wood beyond the plantation in our front, in the skirt of which the enemy's first line was formed[,] was about a mile in depth, the road then leading into an extensive space of cleared ground about Guilford court house.⁶

The "considerable plantation" mentioned by Cornwallis, actually the farmstead of Joseph Hoskins,⁷ is depicted in the bottom third of the Tarleton map (see Figure 2).⁸ Here, the map delineates two contiguous fields on both sides of New Garden Road,⁹ the area's principal thoroughfare (unnamed on the map) that essentially bisected the battlefield on an east-west axis. Since the two fields flanking each side of the road constituted a more expansive clearing, it is easy to understand why Cornwallis viewed each pair as only one field. Collectively, these fields clustered around New Garden Road formed the major open area in the western sector of the battlefield, embracing around 25 acres in total.¹⁰ The Tarleton map also shows the third field listed by Cornwallis immediately to the right (actually south) of the larger clearing. It seems probable that split-rail fencing enclosed these fields, or at least bordered their eastern edge, for Tarleton relates in his *History* that the center of the first American line "was placed behind rails, in the rear of the clearing."¹¹ According to the Tarleton map, the position held by the first American line was located about 450 yards east of the Hoskins house; shown along with a dependency on the right of side of New Garden Road, just below the western edge of the major clearing. One prominent feature in the vicinity of the Hoskins House that the author of the Tarleton map failed to denote was the Little Horsepen Creek. This creek followed a north-south course and was located about 300 yards west of the Hoskins House.

Over a half-mile of dense hardwood forest--predominately varieties of oak intermixed with a few ashes, beeches, chestnuts, hickories, poplars, sourwoods, and sweet gums¹²--separated the Hoskins farm from the open land in the vicinity of the Court House. This "deep forest of lofty trees", as one American officer¹³ described it, provided partial cover for the second American line which stood astride New Garden Road along the crest of an irregular ridge line. Although the Tarleton map does not include this ridge, it depicts the second American line in the woods roughly 500 yards behind the first.

This woodland setting proved inhospitable to formal eighteenth-century tactics, causing considerable cohesion problems for both the advancing British and retreating Americans.¹⁴ "The excessive thickness of the woods," Cornwallis explained, "rendered our bayonets of little use, and enabled the broken enemy to make frequent

⁶ Cornwallis to Lord George Germain, 17 March 1781, in Banastre Tarleton, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781 in the Southern Provinces of North America* (London: T. Cadell, 1787; reprint, Arno Press, 1968), 304; hereafter cited as *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*.

⁷ Joseph Hoskins, originally from Chester County, Pennsylvania, acquired his 100-acre tract of land in Guilford County in 1778.

⁸ Charles Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse* (U. S. Department of the Interior: National Park Service, 1970), 34; Hatch, *Environs*, 70.

⁹ Also known in the period as the "Old Salisbury" or "State Road", New Garden Road ran between the backcountry county seats of Salisbury (Rowan County) to the south and Hillsborough (Orange County) in the east.

¹⁰ Hatch, *Environs*, 70.

¹¹ Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 271.

¹² Hatch, *Environs*, 74.

¹³ The officer: Lieutenant Colonel Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, and the quote is from his *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States* (New York: University Publishing Co., 1869), 275.

¹⁴ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 57-58.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 6

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

stands.”¹⁵ This was particularly true in the southeastern sector of the battlefield where the British right, detaching from their main line, drove elements of the American left away from the primary engagement.¹⁶ This movement is indicated on the Tarleton map by the diagonal lines drawn from the “Second Position” to the far right; yet the map fails to include many of the elevations and ravines that accounted for the terrain’s ruggedness in this area.

One of the battlefield’s most imposing elevations, referred to as an “eminence” by one participant,¹⁷ dominated the “extensive space of cleared ground about Guilford court house” that Cornwallis mentioned in his report. This elevation, on which General Nathanael Greene posted the third and final American line, is shown on the Tarleton map as a bilobate formation to the left of New Garden Road just above and to the left of the major clearing. This clearing apparently encompassed seven fields, covering a total of approximately 65 acres.¹⁸ While the illustrator of the Tarleton map apparently paid close attention to the fields, structures, and elevations around the Court House, he neglected to depict Hunting Creek, which ran north to south along the western base of the hills occupied by the third line.¹⁹

The Tarleton map also denotes seven buildings in the eastern sector of the battlefield: five of which are associated with the fields on the south side of New Garden Road. The Guilford Court House, which “lent its name” to both the battle and “the small community that grew up around it,” is clearly represented on the left side (or north) of New Garden Road about 150 yards above New Garden’s juncture with Reedy Fork Road.²⁰ (As the only other road to play a significant role in the battle, Reedy Fork Road was used by the defeated American army to retire from the field.) The final, or seventh, building on the Tarleton map is situated west of the Court House on the opposite side of Reedy Fork Road (see Figure 2).

None of the extant accounts of the battle contain a physical description of the Guilford Court House; the authors merely mention it by name, as a point of reference when detailing the battlefield’s topography or chronicling the progression of the engagement. For instance, American Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee, who left one of the most in-depth descriptions of the Court House’s location, wrote:

Guilford Court-House, erected near the great State road, is situated on the brow of a declivity, which descends gradually with an undulating slope for about a half a mile.²¹

Even the actual date of the Court House’s construction remains a mystery. The 1770 Act of the North Carolina General Assembly that established Guilford County, out of portions of Orange and Rowan Counties, also “appointed commissioners for laying off a Place, and thereon erecting a Court House, Prison, and Stocks.”²² Yet three years lapsed without any construction and the Assembly had to pass more legislation to propel the project forward again.²³ Thus prodded, the commissioners finally went to work and it is generally believed that

¹⁵ Cornwallis to Lord George Germain, 17 March 1781, in Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 305-306.

¹⁶ Roger Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences During the Late American War* (Dublin: Wilkinson & Courtney, 1809, reprint, New York: Arno Press, Inc., 1968), 353; and Hatch, *Environs*, 74.

¹⁷ Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences*, 352.

¹⁸ Hatch, *Environs*, 72.

¹⁹ Thomas E. Baker, Park Ranger, GCNMP, personal communicant. Most histories of the battle place the third line west of Hunting Creek. Thomas E. Baker suggests that this error derives from the efforts of the Guilford Battle Ground Company--a non-profit organization established to preserve the battlefield in 1887--to make “the interpretation of the battle...fit the company’s land holdings.” See Thomas E. Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 7.

²⁰ Hatch, *Environs*, 1.

²¹ Henry Lee, *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States*, 275.

²² The Act to establish Guilford County was to become effective on 1 April 1771; see Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*, vol. 23 (Goldsboro, N. C.: Nash Bros., 1904), 823-825.

²³ Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*, vol. 23, 972; also see Hatch, *Environs*, 9.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 7**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the Court House was completed sometime before November 1775.²⁴ The only extant description of the Court House's construction details appears in a 1792 report written by county inspectors. The inspectors noted that the Court House measured roughly 36 feet in length, 26 feet in width, and 11 feet in height. In addition to the dimensions, they also mentioned that the Court House had a porch and that most of the windows lacked glass.²⁵

The Founding and Subsequent Decline of Martinville

Following the battle, the local residents resumed their agricultural pursuits, "expanding their subsistence farms by clearing the virgin forest that covered three-quarters of the battlefield's one thousand acres."²⁶ Yet as one historian has observed, "there were those that saw a future for the little courthouse village and sought to stimulate and promote its growth in formalizing a "town plan."²⁷ In 1785, the North Carolina General Assembly chartered the town of Martinville on and adjacent to the tract occupied by the Guilford Court House.²⁸ This action ushered in a temporary period of growth for the area. The town proprietors sold a total of thirteen one-acre lots, distributed in four squares around the intersection of New Garden and Reedy Fork Roads; renamed Green and Battle Streets respectively (see Figure 4).²⁹ However, the town's prosperity was short-lived. After the county seat was moved to Greensboro (about six miles southwest) in 1809, Martinville "began a half-century slide to extinction."³⁰

Forty years after the abandonment of the first Guilford Court House, historian Benson J. Lossing visited the battlefield and found Martinville in a state of "desolation." "There are only a few dilapidated and deserted buildings left," he reported, "and nothing remains of the old Guilford Court house but the ruins of a chimney."³¹ While standing on "an eminence southwest of old Guilford Court House," Lossing produced a sketch of the battlefield that he included in his 1853 *Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution* (see Figure 5).³² Describing this illustration textually, he noted:

The log-house, partially clap-boarded seen on the right was uninhabited. It stands near the woods which intervene between Martinsville [sic] and the plantation of Mr. Hotchkiss [Hoskins]. In the distance, near the center, is seen Martinsville [sic] and between it and the foreground is the rolling vale, its undulations formed by many gulleys [sic].³³

Lossing was not the only contemporary to publish written and visual representations of Martinville in the mid nineteenth century. In July 1857, *Harpers Monthly* printed an engraving of Martinville by the artist David Hunter Strother (who used the pen name Porte Crayon).³⁴ Apparently, Strother came across a scene much like

²⁴ Hatch, *Environs*, 9.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

²⁶ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 1.

²⁷ Hatch, *Environs*, 19.

²⁸ See the "Act to Establish the Town Laid off at Guilford Court House" in Clark, *The State Records of North Carolina*, vol. 24, 779. Martinville was named in honor of Alexander Martin, one of the town's leading promoters who served as Governor of North Carolina (1782-1784); see Hatch, *Environs*, 22. Note: The exact location of the Court House within the confines of Martinville is not known. None of the Martinville deeds specifically reference the location of the Court House structure (Hatch, *Environs*, 23). Raleigh C. Taylor, former superintendent of GCNMP, has concluded the Court House must have occupied an area north of Martinville's north square (See Figure 4). Thomas E. Baker, on the other hand, has suggested, based on precedents set by other backcountry county seats (such as Salisbury and Hillsborough), that the Court House may have stood in the center of the intersection of Green and Battle Streets.

²⁹ Hatch, *Environs*, 22; Raleigh C. Taylor, "The First Guilford Courthouse and Adjacent Land" (unpublished typewritten manuscript in files at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, dated 12 January 1953), 7.

³⁰ Baker, *Redeemed from Oblivion*, 2.

³¹ Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution*, vol. 2 (New York: Harper Brothers, 1860), 389.

³² *Ibid.*, 405, n2.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Hatch, *Environs*, 53.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 8

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the one recorded by Lossing; for he sketched a ruined chimney, possibly that of the Court House, in the midst of a languishing town (see Figure 6). Strother both recounted his visit to Martinville and described the battlefield's condition in an article appearing in the aforementioned publication:

I reined up my horse in the midst of a group of ruined chimneys and decayed wooden houses, all, save one, silent and deserted. There was no human being in sight of whom to make an inquiry, but I instinctively knew that I was on the field of Guilford. The face of the country answered so well to the descriptions which I had read, and there had been apparently so little change since the day of the battle, that there was no difficulty in recognizing the localities.³⁵

By the late 1880s, all physical evidence of Martinville, and the Court House for that matter, had disappeared.³⁶ In the 1930s, a local D. A. R. chapter planted a pin-oak tree (which still stands at tour stop 5 in Guilford Courthouse National Military Park) to mark the location traditionally believed to be the site of the first Guilford Court House (see Figure 7).³⁷ However, the site of the Guilford Court House has yet to be conclusively determined.

Archeological Investigations at the "Traditional" Site of Guilford Court House

Guilford Courthouse National Military Park's 1968 Master Plan called for the construction of a paved, interpretive tour loop complete with a comfort station. To prevent the possible eradication of archeological resources, the National Park Service hired a team from the Research Laboratories of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill) to conduct a site survey in 1972. In the vicinity of the pin oak planted by the D. A. R., the team uncovered significant amounts of archeological evidence associated with the former town of Martinville. Consequently, park officials realigned the tour road's route and relocated the comfort station's parking lot so as not to damage the site.³⁸

In 1974, University of North Carolina archeologists returned to perform a more comprehensive excavation of the "traditional" Court House site. During their 1974-1975 investigations, the archeologists discovered the structural remains of a post-in-ground building (see Figure 8), a chimney fall, and a substantial number of artifacts (reputedly dating from the 1760s to the mid-nineteenth century). The supervising archeologists, Trawick Ward and Joffre L. Coe, maintained that such "evidence suggests a structure very similar to the old courthouse as described in extant historical accounts." In addition to the structural remains and ceramics, Ward and Coe also unearthed a pit (close to one of the structure's post holes) which contained human remains--more specifically "two human tibiae and fibulae along with" assorted bones from a left foot, presumably all from the same person. According to the archeologists, "the most plausible explanation is that they [the bones] represent a double amputation most likely resulting from wounds received during the battle."³⁹ Thus it seemed that oral tradition had accurately identified the site of the Court House.

However, John Cornelison, an archeologist from the Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC), has called Ward

³⁵ Porte Crayon (David Hunter Strother), *The Old South Illustrated*, ed. Cecil D. Eby, Jr. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1959), 206. This book is a compilation of articles, written and illustrated by Strother, which appeared in *Harpers' Monthly* between 1853 and 1858.

³⁶ Hatch, *Environs*, 53-54.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 55-56.

³⁸ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 80.

³⁹ Trawick Ward and Joffre L. Coe, *Archaeological Excavations at the Site of Guilford Courthouse*, 4, 23-24, 36.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 9**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

and Coe's conclusions into question. In the summer of 1997, Cornelison excavated a depression⁴⁰ traditionally identified as the Court House well and concluded that it lacked the depth to have served in that capacity. Moreover, Cornelison has contended that the depression actually dates to the twentieth century. During the winter of 1998, Cornelison and staff examined a random sample of approximately one thousand ceramic sherds unearthed during the Ward-Coe excavation and determined that a significant portion of them had been misdated (i.e., many nineteenth-century artifacts had been erroneously attributed to the eighteenth century).⁴¹ Furthermore, recent deed research suggests that the structural remains uncovered by Ward and Coe may in fact be the vestiges of a store which stood in Lot #1 of Martinville's north square (see Figure 4).⁴²

Early Preservation and Commemoration Efforts, 1876-1902

When David Hunter Strother visited the battlefield in the 1850s, he was pleased to find it "[u]nmarred by monuments" and "uncontaminated by improvements"; but this was destined to change.⁴³ Following the centennial year (1876), which generated patriotic fervor throughout the nation, two bills soliciting Congressional appropriations for erecting monuments at Guilford Court House, among other Revolutionary War sites, were introduced at Capitol Hill but not acted upon. While Congress may have been unwilling to subsidize commemoration at Guilford, a local effort commenced toward that end in 1886 under the auspices of David Schenck, a former Superior Court Judge who had relocated to Greensboro in the early 1880s. Resolving "to redeem the battlefield from oblivion," Schenck initially purchased 50 acres from local farmers. Yet Schenck soon realized he could not defray the costs of land acquisition alone and enlisted the support of several Greensboro businessmen. In March 1887, they formed a non-profit organization known as the Guilford Battle Ground Company and elected Schenck president.⁴⁴

In its inaugural year, the company purchased an additional twelve acres, erected a caretaker's cottage (complete with a reception room and museum), and implemented a landscape "beautification" project. Schenck later reflected that "when the first purchases were made[,] that portion of the land was a tangled wilderness of briars, old field pines, broom sedge and every species of wild growth which comes up on old worn out fields."⁴⁵ The Guilford Battle Ground Company had the landscape cleared and then sown "with a luxuriant crop of oats."⁴⁶ Primarily concerned with "preserving and adorning" the grounds at Guilford, the Guilford Battle Ground Company had no intention of restoring the battlefield to its rugged 1781 appearance. Rather, they envisioned turning the hallowed field into "pleasuring ground" where Americans could reflect upon the momentous events of the nation's past within a park-like setting.⁴⁷ To enhance the attractiveness of the grounds, the company impounded a tributary of Hunting Creek in 1892 to create Lake Wilfong (between the American second and third line positions) and planted a variety of ornamental and exotic trees. In addition to these beautification endeavors, Guilford Battle Ground Company officials also assisted with the reopening of New Garden Road (which had fallen into disuse earlier that century) in order to make the park more accessible.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ This depression is located roughly 30 feet north of the traditional Court House site.

⁴¹ John Cornelison, interviewed by author, 5 August 1998, notes, Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, Greensboro, N. C.

⁴² John Hiatt, "The Southeast Square of Martinville," (unpublished typewritten manuscript, dated August 1998) in files at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, 4.

⁴³ Crayon (Strother), *The Old South Illustrated*, 206.

⁴⁴ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 2-5.

⁴⁵ David Schenck, *A Memorial Volume of the Guilford Battle Ground Company* (Greensboro, N. C.: Power Job Printers, 1893), 9.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁷ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 6-7.

⁴⁸ Schenck, *Memorial Volume*, 9-14; Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 22.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 10**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The same year Schenck acquired the first parcels of battlefield land, the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad completed a section of tracks between the towns of Greensboro and Madison. These tracks traversed the battlefield on a north-south line, running between the positions held by the first and second American lines. The convenience of the trains enhanced attendance at the park's commemorative events and the Guilford Battle Ground Company constructed a restaurant and two spring houses for the refreshment of the visitors.⁴⁹

Under Schenck's leadership, Guilford Battle Ground Park essentially became North Carolina's catch-all Revolutionary War site. In the early 1890s, the former judge arranged for the remains of William Hooper and John Penn--two of North Carolina's three signers of the Declaration of Independence--as well as those of Continental Brigadier General Jethro Sumner to be reinterred on the grounds. Before his death in 1902, Schenck also permitted a number of monuments to be erected in honor of men that had no discernible connection to the battle and some with no direct link to the Revolution.⁵⁰

The Establishment of Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, 1904-1917

As early as 1887, Schenck had entertained the idea of one day turning Guilford Battle Ground Park over to the Federal Government, yet he never actively pursued this prospect during his lifetime. However, in 1904, the Guilford Battle Ground Company's new president persuaded a North Carolina congressman to introduce a bill to establish Guilford Courthouse National Military Park. Congress rejected this bill, and similar propositions presented in 1905 and 1907 met the same fate. These failures prompted the Guilford Battle Ground Company to try a less direct approach. In 1910 they secured the support of Senator Lee S. Overman who introduced a bill to erect a monument to General Nathanael Greene. Thirteen such bills (introduced between 1888 and 1908) had failed to be acted upon, but this time the Legislature responded favorably and the bill became law in February 1911. Congress, which appropriated \$30,000 for the project, requested the Guilford Battle Ground Company to deed to the United States sufficient land on which to raise the monument. The company readily complied, deeding a third of an acre located near the center of the position held by the second American line. Officially dedicated on 3 July 1915, the Greene Monument, a bronze equestrian statue surmounting a marble base, still stands today as the centerpiece of Guilford Court House National Military Park.⁵¹ As one historian has observed:

[The land] donated for this...memorial provided a Federal toehold [at Guilford] and perhaps inclined Congress to respond favorably when Representative Charles M. Stedman introduced another bill to establish Guilford Courthouse National Military Park.⁵²

On 2 March 1917, almost thirty years after Schenck had conceived of making Guilford Battle Ground a National Park, Congress finally enacted legislation to create Guilford Courthouse National Military Park. The Guilford Battle Ground Company transferred 125 acres, "adorned" with 28 monuments and graves, at no cost to the War Department. Thus Guilford Courthouse National Military Park became the first Revolutionary War battlefield to be set aside as a National Park.⁵³

⁴⁹ Schenck, *Memorial Volume*, 9-14.

⁵⁰ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 8-9.

⁵¹ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 10-11; Thomas E. Baker, *The Monuments at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park* (1979), 26.

⁵² Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 11.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 11-12.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 11

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The War Department's Tenure, 1917-1933

The park managers employed by the War Department continued to adhere “to the policies of the Guilford Battle Ground Company that seemed to prefer picnic grounds to battlefield preservation.” Although the War Department only inherited about twelve percent of the battlefield’s total acreage, no attempt was made to preserve any of the remaining parcels of battlefield land. At the beginning of the War Department’s tenure, the unpreserved portion of the battlefield was relatively free of intrusions--yet this would soon change. By the early 1920s, the city of Greensboro (which would incorporate the battlefield area in 1984) had quadrupled in size, encroaching to within three miles of the National Military Park. As a result of this growth, a circa 1890 roadbed--which bisected the battlefield, running parallel to the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley railroad tracks--was paved and designated U. S. Highway 220 in 1925.⁵⁴

Two other significant developments linked to the expansion of Greensboro occurred in the early 1930s; both of which had a direct impact on the battlefield. In 1930, the City of Greensboro established Forest Lawn Cemetery over the position held by the left flank of the second American line. Two years later, the Civil Works Administration (an offshoot of the New Deal) began construction on Greensboro Country Park, a 79-acre recreational area located in the southeastern sector of the battlefield.⁵⁵ Completed in 1934, this park (currently operated by Greensboro’s Parks and Recreation Department) encompasses, and preserves,⁵⁶ a portion of the ground over which the British right and the American left fought after detaching from the main battle.

The National Park Service at Guilford, 1933-Present

In 1933, the War Department transferred Guilford Courthouse National Military Park to the National Park Service. In many respects this transfer occasioned “a definitive break with the park’s past as a beautiful picnic ground.” The National Park Service drained Lake Wilfong and reforested the two-acre lakebed with hardwoods in an effort to restore it to its battle-day appearance. Furthermore, the Park Service removed the exotic and historically incompatible plants dating from the Guilford Battle Ground Company’s tenure. In 1938, however, construction commenced on a landscaped amphitheater (which still exists today) in the vicinity of the Greene monument. One scholar has accurately labeled the construction of the amphitheater “a throwback to the Guilford Battle Ground Company’s discredited philosophy of preservation by ornamentation.”⁵⁷

Three years prior to the amphitheater’s construction, the current superintendent’s residence and park utility building were built, along with an administration center (demolished in 1975), on land between the first and second lines. In 1941, the Public Works Commission realigned the section of U. S. 220 that traversed the park, moving it a half-mile west of the park’s boundary.⁵⁸ The old section of U. S. 220 remained open and was locally renamed “Old Battleground Road”. Today, Old Battleground Road has become a heavily traveled north-south connector.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 18, 22, 85.

⁵⁵ Ethel Stephens Arnett, *Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat of Guilford* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1955), 455; C. W. Smedberg, “A Description of Greensboro Country Park as Developed by the Civil Works Administration, 1933-1934 (unpublished typewritten manuscript) in files at Greensboro Country Park, 1.

⁵⁶ This indirect preservation did not come without a cost to the battlefield’s integrity in that area. Three man-made lakes, a paved road circumscribing the lakes, and a number of recreational structures were all constructed on the property. However, only two of the lakes exist today.

⁵⁷ Baker, *Redeemed From Oblivion*, 21, 23-24, 27, 34.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 20, 24.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 12

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The National Park Service never implemented an earnest land acquisition program at Guilford. Consequently, only 95 acres have been added to the original 125 deeded to the Federal Government in 1917, and urban encroachment has overrun considerable portions of the battlefield. The park reached its current size of 220 acres (roughly one-fourth of the total battlefield) in the 1970s. This decade also witnessed sweeping changes at the park. A new visitor center and a paved tour loop, equipped with interpretive waysides and a comfort station, were completed in time for the Bicentennial. In the mid 1970s, the National Park Service also succeeded in closing down the section of New Garden Road that ran east through the park from its intersection with Old Battleground Road. After its closure, the historic road was restored to its approximate eighteenth-century appearance.⁵⁹ Another anachronism was removed from the park when the old Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad tracks were abandoned in 1982. In 1990 the old railroad line was converted into a recreational greenway corridor.

The Establishment of Tannenbaum Historic Park

Alarmed by the escalation of development in the battlefield's western sector, a coalition of Greensboro citizens formed a non-profit organization, raised funds, and then purchased the circa 1778 Hoskins House, along with seven surrounding acres, in 1984. As the only building present at the time of the battle to survive to the present, the Hoskins House was originally built as a single-pen, V-notched log structure with an exterior stone chimney on the west gable end. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, the Hoskins House was extensively remodeled, expanded, and retrofitted with modern amenities. In 1986, the non-profit group undertook a project to restore the historic structure to its approximate 1781 appearance. The restoration, which required the demolition of twentieth century additions, the removal of a modern brick veneer, and the replacement of deteriorated logs, was completed in 1987. During this period the non-profit group also reconstructed the kitchen dependency and brought an early nineteenth century barn to the site.⁶⁰ In 1988, the non-profit organization transferred the property to the City of Greensboro which in turn opened the site as Tannenbaum Historic Park (named after a local doctor whose family donated a large sum of money for the project). Initially a twentieth-century brick home (also acquired by the non-profit group in 1984) served as the park's visitor center. This home was demolished to make room for the park's current visitor center (completed in 1992).

Site Integrity

While residential and commercial development has consumed a substantial portion of the Guilford Court House Battlefield, the proposed National Historic Landmark Boundary encompasses its best remnant. The proposed boundary, which embraces federal, municipal, and privately owned properties, contains 319 acres and is relatively free of intrusions. Including areas of open land and dense woods, the site retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.

The contributing resources include the site of the battlefield's core, one building (Hoskins House), one structure (the restored section of New Garden Road), and one townsite (the archeological location of Guilford Court House/Martinville). The proposed National Historic Landmark boundary contains 31 modern non-contributing buildings and one circa 1830 barn (also non-contributing).

In addition to these buildings, the boundary also encompasses eight non-contributing structures--namely, sections of four modern roads (New Garden, Old Battleground, and Greenbrier), the tour road which loops

⁵⁹ Ibid., 79, 120.

⁶⁰ Michael T. Southern, "National Register Nomination Form for the Hoskins House Historic District," 1988, in files at Tannenbaum Historic Park, Greensboro, N. C., 8.2.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 13**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

through the National Park, and three visitor parking lots (two at GCNMP and one at Tannenbaum Historic Park). Finally, the boundary comprises 28 non-contributing objects (monuments). They are as follows:

1. Bell Monument-This monument, of granite construction with a bronze plaque, was unveiled on February 23, 1929. It measures 5'5" in height and 3'5" wide, not counting the stone base. The inscription is on the bronze plaque on the east side of the monument:

2. David Cladwell Monument-This granite monument was unveiled on July 3, 1909, and measures 6'1" in height and 3' wide, not counting the base stone. There are inscriptions on all four sides.

3. Continental Monument-This monument, beneath which are interred three American soldiers, was placed on the field some time after July 12, 1888 and measures 5'7" in height and 1'8" wide at the widest point. The base is blue and white marble and the shaft is pink marble. Sometime after 1930 the shaft was toppled and broken. The broken top half of about 18 inches was discarded and the half was repointed to the original shape. Thus the present monument is about 18 inches shorter than the original one.

4. John Daves monument-The original monument, erected in 1893, consisted of the present marble slab placed on six store pedestals, each two and one-half feet high. The marble slab measures 6'9" long and 3' wide. On the west end of this arrangement was placed a stone marker perpendicular to the ground. An inscription on this stone marker stated that the monument was erected in June of 1893. (The erection date was actually August 22, 1893). Some time between 1922 and 1932 the monument was struck by a motor vehicle and the marble slab was broken into two pieces. Since it was practically impossible to repair the stone so it would be safe on top of the pedestals, the pedestals and the end stone were removed and the broken slab placed flush with the ground and surrounded by a concrete frame. On March 2, 1948 a small bronze plaque was placed in front of the grave by members of the North Carolina Chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

5. "Hal" Dixon monument-This monument, of granite construction with a bronze plaque, was erected on February 14, 1896. It measures 4'7" in height and 3'6" wide, not counting the base stone.

6. Griffin Fauntleroy monument-This granite monument was erected some time between June 30, 1931 and April, 1932. It measures 3' in height and 2'7" wide, not counting the base stone.

7. Arthur Forbis monument-This granite monument was placed on the battlefield in August, 1887. It measures 2'5" in height and 1'7" in width, not counting the base stone.

8. Gillies monument-This granite monument was dedicated on May 6, 1898. It measures 6'7" in height and 4' in width at the widest point.

9. Nathanael Greene monument-This granite and bronze monument was dedicated on July 3, 1915 and measures 27'9" in height and 42' in width.

10. Hooper-Penn-Hawes monument-This monument was dedicated on July 4, 1894 and measures approximately 18' in height and 5' in width at the widest point. The name WILLIAM HOOPER is carved into the east face of the monument and the name JOHN PENN is carved into the west face of the monument.

11. Nathaniel Macon monument- This monument, of granite construction with a bronze plaque, was dedicated on July 4, 1902. It measures 4'10" in height and 2'6" in width, not counting the base stone.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 14**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

12. Maryland monument- This monument of granite construction with two bronze plaques, was dedicated on October 15, 1892. It measures 5'7'' in height and 4'2'' in width. On the west side of the monument is a bronze plaque with the Maryland coat of arms on it.

13. James Morehead monument-This monument, of granite construction with a bronze plaque, was erected during the September, 1900. It measures 4'9'' in height and 4'7'' in width at the bottom. The inscription is on a bronze plaque on the north side of the monument.

14. Joseph Morehead monument-This monument, of granite and bronze construction, was dedicated on July 4, 1913. It measures 13' in height and 5' in width at the base. (At the present time, the bronze statue has been removed due to vandalism.) On the south side of the monument is a bronze plaque with the inscription.

15. No North-No South monument-This granite monument was dedicated on July 4, 1904, and measures 4'3'' in height and 2'8'' in width, not counting the base.

16. George Reynolds monument-This granite monument was unveiled on November 23, 1928, and measures 3'10'' in height and 4' in width, not counting the base stone. The inscription is on the north face.

17. David Schenck monument-This granite monument was unveiled on July 4, 1904, and measures 11' in height and 4'10'' in width. On the south face of the monument is a plaque with the inscription.

18. Edward Stevens monument-This granite monument was unveiled on October 15, 1931, and measures 2'6'' in height and 2'4'' in width, not counting the base stone. The inscription is on a bronze plaque located on the south side of the monument.

19. James Stuart Monument-This marble monument was erected in 1895, and measures 5'2'' in height and 1'6'' in width, not counting the base.

20. Jethro Sumner monument-This stone monument was erected on May 23, 1891. Underneath are the remains of Jethro Sumner. The monument measures 3'6'' in height and 2'5'' in width, not counting the two lower stones.

21. James Tate monument-This granite monument, beneath which are interred the remains of James Tate, was erected on May 27, 1891. It measures 5' in height not counting the brick base, and 1'6'' wide at the shaft.

22. American Third Line Monument-This granite monument was unveiled on July 4, 1910, and measures 15' in height and 1'8'' in diameter at the lower part of the shaft.

23. Turner monument-This granite and bronze monument was erected in October, 1903, and measures 11' in height and 3'4'' in width at the widest point, not counting the base stone. The inscription is on the north face of the monument.

24. Francisco Monument-This granite monument was completed in 1910, and measures 22'4'' in height and 4'10'' in width at the granite base.

25. George Washington's Visit monument-This granite monument was unveiled on November 11, 1925, and measures 3'1'' in height and 3'1'' in width.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 15National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

26. Joseph Winston monument-This granite and bronze monument was completed in the spring of 1895. It measures 15' in height and 5'6'' in width at the base.

27. and 28. Winston and Franklin graves-The remains of these two men were reinterred on the battlefield in the fall of 1906. The stones marking the gravesites are nearly illegible. Bronze plaques placed after 1965 identify the sites at the present time. The burial plot measures approximately 7' x 7' and is marked by a chain and a post fence.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 16

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally: X
 Statewide: ___ Locally: ___

Applicable National
 Register Criteria:

A X B ___ C ___ D ___

Criteria Considerations
 (Exceptions):

A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___

NHL Criteria:

Criterion 1

NHL Theme(s):

IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
3. military institutions and activities

Areas of Significance:

Military

Period(s) of Significance:

15 March 1781

Significant Dates:

15 March 1781

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

N/A

Historic Context:

IV: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
D. WAR IN THE SOUTH

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 17

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**Summary Statement of Significance**

On 15 March 1781, American Major General Nathanael Greene's 4,400 Continentals and militiamen clashed with 1,900 British professionals, under Lieutenant General Charles, Earl Cornwallis, at the Battle of Guilford Court House. This battle, fought in the rugged North Carolina backcountry, was one of the most fiercely contested engagements of the Revolutionary War's climactic Southern Campaign. After two hours of intensive fighting, Greene's army withdrew from the field, allowing Cornwallis to claim victory. However, the British tactical triumph at Guilford Court House cost Cornwallis more than one-fourth of his army; a deprivation that severely compromised his ability to continue offensive operations. Greene, on the other hand, suffered comparatively lighter casualties and retreated in good order with his army still intact.

Paradoxically, Cornwallis' victory at Guilford Court House was tantamount to defeat. Lacking the requisite strength to either pursue Greene or remain in North Carolina as an occupying force, the crippled British army withdrew to the port of Wilmington on the North Carolina coast. From there Cornwallis ill-advisedly marched north into Virginia where a combined Franco-American army compelled him to surrender his beleaguered forces at Yorktown on 19 October 1781. While sporadic fighting continued for another year or so, the crushing defeat at Yorktown effectively sealed the British fate in America. Since the losses sustained by the British army on 15 March 1781 figured prominently into Cornwallis' decision to move into Virginia, historians consider the Battle of Guilford Court House one of the final links in a chain of events that led to ultimate American victory in the Revolutionary War.

Historical Context: The War Moves South

The course of the Revolutionary War shifted dramatically after France, inspired by the stunning American victory at Saratoga (17 October 1777), formed a military alliance with the United States in February 1778. Finding themselves embroiled in a conflict of greater proportions, the British temporarily assumed the defensive in America and by July the war had reached a strategic stalemate in the northern theater. Late in 1778, the British regained the initiative when they implemented a new strategy designed to subdue the vulnerable yet economically valuable South. The decision to strike southward was based, in part, on the misguided belief that the appearance of His Majesty's troops would encourage the multitudes of loyalists, thought to exist in the South, to rise up against their rebel neighbors. With this additional manpower, the British believed they could retake and hold the South without having to rely on large numbers of regulars.⁶¹

The Southern Campaign opened auspiciously enough for the British. In December 1778 they captured Savannah, Georgia and then successfully defended the city against a Franco-American siege in 1779. Emboldened by these triumphs, Sir Henry Clinton, commander in chief of British forces in America, sailed from New York with 8,500 redcoats to attack Charleston, South Carolina. After a short siege, the strategically important port capitulated along with its 5,000 American defenders in May 1780. Having thus secured Charleston for the Crown, Clinton returned to New York, leaving his aggressive subordinate, Lieutenant General Charles Earl Cornwallis in command of the Southern Army.

⁶¹ Thomas E. Baker, *Another Such Victory* (Eastern National, 1981), 4-5; Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983), 231, 353-354.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 18

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Complying with instructions left by Clinton, Cornwallis spent the first few months of his new command establishing a chain of military outposts across South Carolina. In August, an American army marched down from North Carolina to challenge the British hold on upper South Carolina. Cornwallis rushed to confront this threat and routed the Americans—commanded by Horatio Gates, the lauded “Hero of Saratoga”—at Camden on 16 August 1780. A month later, Cornwallis proceeded to launch an offensive against North Carolina but sickness broke out among the ranks, impeding the progress of his advance. The British suffered an even greater reversal in October when a band of frontiersmen eradicated the entire left wing of Cornwallis’ invasion force (a loyalist contingent numbering about 1,000 strong) at Kings Mountain, South Carolina. These setbacks convinced Cornwallis of the imprudence of continuing the invasion and he ordered his army to fall back to Winnsboro, South Carolina (see Figure 10).⁶²

Greene Takes Command

Following the debacle at Camden, Congress relieved Horatio Gates of his command and authorized General George Washington to hand-pick a successor. Washington promptly chose his most trusted lieutenant, Major General Nathanael Greene. On 3 December 1780, Greene assumed command of what he called “the Shadow of an Army in the midst of Distress” near Charlotte, North Carolina.⁶³ Inadequately clothed and equipped, poorly fed, and consequently fraught with disease, the army that Greene inherited could only field one-third of its total fighting force. The new general immediately took measures to ameliorate his army’s miserable condition, securing new shoes, uniforms, and other essential materiel. Since the countryside surrounding Charlotte had been scoured clean of all sustenance, Greene found it necessary to move his troops to a more fruitful area. In mid December he halved his army, personally leading one wing southeast toward Cheraw, South Carolina where scouts had found food to be more plentiful. The remainder, a 1,000-man wing under Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, was ordered to cross the Catawba River and threaten British interests in western South Carolina.⁶⁴ Dividing his forces before a numerically superior foe was an exceedingly risky move, but Greene had a solid grasp on the strategic situation:

It makes the most of my inferior force, for it compels my adversary to divide his, and holds him in doubt as to his line of conduct. He cannot leave Morgan behind him to come at me, or his posts at Ninety-Six and Augusta would be exposed. And he cannot chase Morgan far or prosecute his views upon Virginia, while I am here with the whole country open before me.⁶⁵

Greene read his opponent well. Cornwallis sent 1,150 crack troops, under the redoubtable Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton (who was also called the “Green Dragoon” due to the color of the coats worn by his provincial legion), to counter Morgan’s advance.⁶⁶

Tarleton caught up with the Americans near the North Carolina border and the two small armies clashed at Hannah’s Cowpens, South Carolina on 17 January 1781. Morgan’s decision to fight seemed ill-advised; he was outnumbered with his back against an impassable river, he lacked artillery, and his command included a sizable contingent of militia, whose unreliability in battle had proven catastrophic

⁶² John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 80-81; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 8-14.

⁶³ Richard K. Showman, ed., *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, vol. 6 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 533.

⁶⁴ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 17-20; John S. Pancake, *This Destructive War: The British Campaign in the Carolinas, 1780-1782* (University of Alabama Press, 1985), 129-131.

⁶⁵ George Washington Greene, *The Life of Nathanael Greene*, vol. 3 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1897), 131.

⁶⁶ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 20.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 19**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

for other American generals. To get the most out of his militia, Morgan placed them on the front line. Understanding their propensity to run in the face of the enemy, he instructed the militia to fire two volleys at the advancing redcoats, then they could retire and reform behind the Continentals who would receive the brunt of Tarleton's attack. Morgan also directed cavalry under Lieutenant Colonel William Washington, cousin of George Washington, to cover their retreat if Tarleton's dragoons pursued.⁶⁷

Underestimating the resolve of their adversaries, the British charged headlong into disaster, suffering nearly 900 casualties, 600 of which were taken prisoner, while the Americans only lost around 75 killed and wounded.⁶⁸ Lamenting the loss at Cowpens, Cornwallis wrote: "The Late affair has almost broke my heart."⁶⁹

The day after Cowpens, the "Green Dragoon's" shattered command, as well as 1,500 reinforcements under Major General Alexander Leslie, arrived at Cornwallis' camp located about 25 miles southwest of Charlotte. Now commanding 2,400 redcoats, Cornwallis struck out after Morgan on 25 January. The British general hoped to crush Morgan (and thereby liberate the 600 British prisoners) before the victor of Cowpens could join Greene. To expedite the pursuit, Cornwallis ordered the destruction of all superfluous baggage, starting with his own. Meanwhile, General Greene had resolved to reunite his far-flung forces.⁷⁰ Leaving General Isaac Huger in command of his wing near Cheraw, which had been reinforced by Lieutenant Colonel Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee's Legion,⁷¹ Greene rode off to join Morgan in order to personally supervise the retreat.

The two wings of Greene's army were able to successfully elude the British and rendezvoused at Guilford Court House, North Carolina on 8 February 1781. Although he had reunited his command, Greene believed his army was still too weak to risk a general engagement.⁷² While at Guilford, a sciatica-wracked Daniel Morgan asked for a leave of absence--keeping the saddle had become too painful for the victor of Cowpens. Greene regrettably granted him leave and Morgan departed for Virginia on 10 February. That same day the American army broke camp and continued their retreat toward Virginia. Once again, the British pursued with celerity, only to be outmaneuvered by Greene who succeeded in getting his army safely across the Dan River (via the Boyd and Irwin ferries), taking nearly all available boats with him. Believing his force "ill-suited to enter by that quarter so powerful a province as Virginia," Cornwallis gave up the chase and retired southwest to Hillsborough, North Carolina to both secure much-needed provisions and call the area loyalists to arms.⁷³

Greene would not long remain on the defensive in Virginia. By 24 February his army, reinforced by 800 Virginia militia under General Edward Stevens, had recrossed the Dan River and was marching toward Hillsborough. As the Americans pushed south, contingents of over mountain men, including William Campbell's 100 crack riflemen, arrived to further augment their ranks.⁷⁴ Reacting to Greene's movements the following day, Cornwallis quit Hillsborough, forded the Haw River, and positioned his

⁶⁷ Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 131-135.

⁶⁸ Henry Lumpkin, *From Savannah to Yorktown* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981), 132.

⁶⁹ Earl Cornwallis to Francis Rawdon, January 21, 1781, P.R.O., London, 30/11/84, 78.

⁷⁰ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 23-24

⁷¹ Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 353.

⁷² Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 24-25.

⁷³ Charles E. Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse* (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1971), 3-4; Cornwallis quote found in Banastre Tarleton, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 265.

⁷⁴ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 5, 8.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 20

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

army near the Alamance Creek (about 25 miles southeast of Guilford Court House) so as to command the roads leading to major settlements in the North Carolina backcountry.⁷⁵ Greene's army followed, reaching the Haw on 26 February. For the next couple of weeks the two armies shadowed one another, marching, countermarching, and engaging in sharp cavalry skirmishes and harassing tactics as they slowly moved westward toward Guilford Court House.⁷⁶ The rigors of such campaigning proved overwhelming to some of Greene's militia and desertions increased significantly. But by 11 March, 550 Virginia Continentals and two 1000-man militia units, one from North Carolina and the other from Virginia, had reinforced his army.⁷⁷ With approximately 4,400 troops at his disposal, Greene now enjoyed a two-to-one numerical advantage over Cornwallis' 2,200 redcoats. Yet the fact that inexperienced militia constituted over half of the American army offset Greene's superiority in numbers; for Cornwallis' ranks were composed entirely of disciplined veterans. Despite the variable quality of his troops, Greene resolved to attack the British and marched his army to within striking distance.

Before dusk on 14 March, the Americans reached the hamlet of Guilford Court House and pitched camp for the night. Now only 12 miles intervened between Greene's army and the British who were bivouacked at Deep River Friends Meeting House (southwest of Guilford). That evening, Cornwallis received intelligence that Greene had advanced to Guilford Court House with the intention of attacking. The aggressive British General now saw an opportunity to preempt the rebels and undertook preparations for his own attack. If his troops marched expeditiously enough, Cornwallis reasoned, they might even surprise the Americans in their camp. The British baggage train, protected by 120 regulars, rumbled out of camp, en route to Bell's Mill on Deep River, at about 4 o'clock the following morning. An hour-and-a-half later, Cornwallis ordered his unfed army, now just under 2,000 strong, to move northeastward along New Garden Road toward the Americans at Guilford Court House.⁷⁸ Tarleton described the order of march as follows: "The cavalry, the light infantry of the guards, and the yagers [jaegers: German riflemen], composed the advanced guard. Colonel Webster's brigade, the regiment of Bose [Hessians], and the brigade of guards, followed successively: The artillery marched with their respective divisions."⁷⁹

Prelude to Battle: The Skirmishes of New Garden

Ever-fearful of a night attack, Greene ordered "Light Horse Harry" Lee to advance his Legion (consisting of 75 dragoons and 82 infantrymen, along with Campbell's 100 riflemen) to a position two or three miles west of the Court House on New Garden Road.⁸⁰ Lee, in turn, "detached" Lieutenant James Heard, "with a party of dragoons[,] to place himself near the British camp, and to report from time to time such occurrences as might happen." Around 2 a.m. on 15 March, Heard reported to Lee "that a large body of horse" was on the move. Lee immediately forwarded this intelligence to Greene and ordered Heard to move along the enemy's flank "to discover whether the British army was in motion." Although British "patrols ranging far from the line of march" impeded this reconnaissance, Heard concluded from "the rumbling of wheels" that "a general movement" had commenced. Instead of a "general movement", the Legion Lieutenant most likely detected the British baggage train departing for Bell's Mill. Nonetheless, Lee soon expected battle. After relaying Heard's report to Greene, "Light

⁷⁵ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 30.

⁷⁶ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 8-9, 14.

⁷⁷ Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 177.

⁷⁸ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 33-35.

⁷⁹ Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 270.

⁸⁰ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 35.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 21

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Horse Harry” called his troops to arms. It was now 4 a.m., and Lee directed his soldiers “to take breakfast with all practical haste” while they awaited the General’s instructions.⁸¹

Just after the Legion soldiers and riflemen finished their breakfast, a messenger arrived with orders from Greene which directed Lee “to advance with his cavalry...and ascertain the truth” of the enemy movements. Having instructed the infantry and riflemen to follow, Lee led his dragoons west along New Garden Road toward the Quaker Meeting House. (The New Garden Meeting House stood about four miles southwest of Guilford Court House). About two miles down the road, “Light Horse Harry” met up with Heard who was retiring with his patrol before the advance of the British vanguard under Banastre Tarleton. The British van, consisting of about 450 men in total, included the “Green Dragoon’s” own 272 loyalist legionnaires, 84 jaeger riflemen, and 100 light infantrymen from the Brigade of Guards.⁸²

Having assessed the strength of the oncoming redcoats, Lee elected to fall back so as “to gain the proximity [and thereby the support] of the rifle militia and Legion infantry.” The impetuous Tarleton mistook this “retrograde movement” as a “rout” and ordered his men to press Lee’s rearguard. After their initial charge proved ineffective, the British “emptied their pistols, and then raising a shout, pushed a second time.” Lee waited until the British troopers had reached a long section of New Garden “with very high curved fences on each side of the road,” and then ordered his retreating dragoons to turn about-face and charge the pursuing British.⁸³ According to Lee, his counterattack was a complete success:

The whole of the enemy’s section was dismounted, and many of the horses prostrated; some of the [British] dragoons killed, the rest made prisoner; not a single American soldier or horse was injured.⁸⁴

Tarleton and the remnant of his command retreated precipitately, taking an “obscure way” back to the New Garden Meeting House. Lee and his troopers followed “the common route”, hoping to cut the “Green Dragoon” off from the main British army.⁸⁵

Unbeknownst to Lee, the British Guards had already reached the Meeting House, and as he and his cavalry neared the house of worship they met with “a close general fire” from the King’s unit. “The sun had just risen above the trees,” Lee later recounted, “and shining bright, the refulgence from the British muskets” frightened his horse which then ejected him. “Light Horse Harry” quickly found another mount and ordered a retreat. As the cavalry retired, the Legion infantry and Campbell’s riflemen rushed to the front and began exchanging volleys with the redcoats. According to Lee, “the action became very sharp and was bravely maintained on both sides.” Ultimately, the arrival of the British 23rd Regiment compelled the Americans to fall back to the security of the main army, which was deploying on the ground west of Guilford Court House. The British pursued for a short distance, but relented because “there were many proofs...that General Greene was at hand.” Thus Lee’s command rode on unmolested and reached the American lines shortly before noon. Tarleton, who received a wound to his right hand that necessitated the amputation of his thumb and forefinger, estimated that his forces sustained 30 casualties in the hotly-contested New Garden skirmishes. Lee, on the other hand, maintained American losses were much lighter.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Lee, *Memoirs of the War*, 272-273.

⁸² Lee, *Memoirs*, 273; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 36.

⁸³ Lee, *Memoirs*, 273-274.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Lee, *Memoirs of the War*, 274-275; Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 271; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 38-39.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 22

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The Battle of Guilford Court House

While Lee's Legion and Campbell's riflemen delayed the British advance along New Garden Road, General Greene attended to the deployment of his army. Nearly one month earlier, the convalescing Brigadier, Daniel Morgan, had written Greene to advise him on his troop dispositions for the imminent battle with Cornwallis:

You'l [sic] have from what I see, a great number of militia—if they fight you'l [sic] beat Cornwallis[,] if not, he will beat you and perhaps cut your regulars to pieces...I am informed among the militia will be a number of old Soldiers. I think it would be advisable to select them from among the militia, and put them in the ranks with the regulars, select the riflemen also, and fight them in the flanks under enterprising officers who is [sic] acquainted with that kind of fighting and put the remainder of the Militia in the centre [sic] with some picked troops in their rear with orders to shoot down the first man that runs.⁸⁷

One scholar of the Battle of Guilford Court House has observed that “Greene noted Morgan's suggestions, but did not slavishly conform to them; rather he seemed to draw more direct inspiration from the example Morgan had set at Cowpens.” Although Greene “elected to employ a similar defense in depth,” the terrain around Guilford Court House—which the American commander described as “a Wilderness, with a few cleared fields interspersed here and there”—proved inconducive to an exact replication of Morgan's successful dispositions. Believing he could derive certain advantages from “this tapestry of woodlands and clearings,” Greene divided his army into three separate lines, as opposed to Morgan's two at Cowpens. Greene also deviated from his triumphant subordinate's tactics by spacing his lines too far apart to support, or even see, one another. Furthermore, the American general could not command a full view of the battlefield because of its considerable size and the extensiveness of the wooded areas. This inhibited Greene's capacity to either exploit an advantage or remedy a potentially untoward situation.⁸⁸

Greene placed the North Carolina militia, his least reliable troops, at the center of the first line. Grouped in two brigades, which together numbered over 1,000 men, the North Carolinians stood astride New Garden Road. Brigadier General Thomas Eaton's brigade extended north from the thoroughfare, while Brigadier John Butler's militia mirrored them to the south. Facing west, with their backs to the woods, the North Carolinians held a position behind a split rail fence that bordered the eastern edge, or rear, of the fields associated with the Hoskins plantation. Slightly in front of the North Carolina militia, Greene stationed Captain Anthony Singleton's two six-pounder cannons in the middle of New Garden Road. Heeding Morgan's suggestion, Greene also placed riflemen, bolstered by regular infantry and cavalry, on the militia's flanks. On the right flank, Colonel Charles Lynch's 200 Virginia riflemen and Captain Robert Kirkwood's 80-man Delaware company were supported by Lieutenant Colonel William Washington's 100 dragoons of the 1st and 3rd Virginia regiments. After Lee's Legion and Campbell's riflemen joined the main army following the New Garden skirmishes, they took up a position on the North Carolina militia's left flank. Both of these flank extensions stretched into the woods and were angled forward obliquely toward the advancing British so as to hit them with enfilading, or raking, fire (see Figure 11). All together, the first line measured approximately 1300 yards in length and was situated about a mile west of the Guilford Court House.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Daniel Morgan to Nathanael Greene, 20 February 1781, in Showman, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, vol. 7, 324.

⁸⁸ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 43-44; Showman, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, vol. 7, 434; Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 373.

⁸⁹ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 43-45; Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 271; Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 34-36.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 23

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

About a half-mile of woodland intervened between the Hoskins fields and a larger clearing in the vicinity of the Court House. Greene posted the second American line in these woods, over 500 yards behind the North Carolinians.⁹⁰ Composed of two brigades of Virginia militia, about 1,200 men in total, the second line, like the first, straddled New Garden Road. Brigadier General Robert Lawson's brigade stretched north from the road while the militiamen under Brigadier General Edward Stevens continued the line to the south. Stevens, whose militia had fled the field at Camden, placed a line of sentinels about 20 yards behind the main line "with instructions to shoot down any militiaman who broke ranks and ran" (see Figure 11).⁹¹

Greene reserved the bulk of his continentals, some 1,400 troops, for the third line. These soldiers, the backbone of the American army, were deployed in a "double front" formation on the brow of an eminence located immediately north of New Garden Road and northwest of the Court House (see Figure 2).⁹² Located over 600 yards behind the Virginia militia, the third American line commanded the extensive area of cleared ground to the south and west of the Court House.⁹³ As a general precaution, Greene intentionally positioned his continentals close to Reedy Fork Road to give them an open avenue of retreat.⁹⁴

The continentals on the third line were divided into two brigades: one from Virginia under Brigadier General Isaac Huger and the other from Maryland led by Colonel Otho Williams. Each brigade consisted of two regiments. Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Ford's 2nd Maryland regiment--composed chiefly of new levies--held the line's far left, nearly touching New Garden Road. The veteran 1st Maryland under Colonel John Gunby moved into position on Ford's right. Next in line was Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Hawes' Virginia regiment. The remaining Virginia regiment, commanded by Colonel John Green, completed the line on the right. (Both of the Virginia regiments had been raised to replace units captured at Charleston in 1780 and were made up mostly of raw recruits.) To buttress the third line, Greene placed two six-pounders, under the direction of Lieutenant Ebenezer Finley, between the two brigades (see Figure 11).⁹⁵

By deploying his army in three separate lines, Greene hoped to compensate for the militia's shortcomings. He understood their limited fighting capability and did not expect them to lock into hand-to-hand combat with the British professionals. Rather, he instructed the North Carolina militia to fire a couple of volleys at the advancing redcoats and then fall back. To prevent the Carolinians from stampeding the Virginia line, Greene ordered the latter to open ranks and allow them to pass through. Once the first line collapsed, the American general expected the regulars on its flanks to retire and reposition themselves on the right and left of the Virginians. When the second line broke the regulars were to take up similar positions on the third line.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ This distance estimate was inferred from the troop positions on the Tarleton map (see Figure 2). Although General Greene wrote, "the second line was...about 300 Yards in the rear of the first," his estimate seems entirely too conservative (see Showman, *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, vol. 7, 434). Park Ranger Thomas E. Baker measured the actual ground between the two positions (both of which have been conclusively identified) and concluded that the Tarleton map provides a more accurate representation of the distance (Thomas E. Baker, personal communicant). As further evidence of the distance between the first and second lines, at least one Virginia militiaman of the second line believed he was on the first; see William Henry Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856), 144.

⁹¹ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 36-37, 132.

⁹² Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 45-46.

⁹³ Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 272.

⁹⁴ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 39.

⁹⁵ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 37-38; Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 373.

⁹⁶ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 47.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 24

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Shortly after noon, the leading elements of the British column, marching up New Garden Road, reached Little Horsepen Creek and began to cross. Catching sight of the British, who were now only 800 yards west of the first American line, Captain Singleton promptly opened fire with his two cannons. Cornwallis halted his column and directed Lieutenant MacLeod of the royal artillery to answer the American barrage with his own two three-pounder guns. During this artillery duel, which lasted about 20 minutes and caused only minor damage, “Cornwallis crossed all of his troops over Little Horsepen, and...deployed them for battle.”⁹⁷

The fact that Cornwallis was largely unfamiliar with the terrain did not deter him from attacking. Using the woods west of the Hoskins House as cover, the British general arrayed his troops in two wings. On the right side, or south, of New Garden Road, he posted Major General Alexander Leslie’s wing, consisting of Lieutenant Colonel Duncan McPherson’s 71st Regiment of Scottish Highlanders, the blue-coated Hessians of Lieutenant Colonel Johann Christian DuBuy’s Regiment von Bose, and Lieutenant Colonel Norton’s 1st Battalion of Guards. The 71st Regiment, composed of 244 men, was positioned adjacent to the road with the 321 Hessians of the Regiment von Bose on their right (see Figure 11). Norton’s 200 Guards were held in reserve.⁹⁸ To the north, or left, of New Garden Road, Cornwallis deployed Lieutenant Colonel James Webster’s wing. Webster had command of his own 33rd Regiment of Foot and Lieutenant Nesbitt Balfour’s 23rd Regiment (the Royal Welsh Fusiliers). The 23rd extended north from the road and the 33rd deployed to their left. Together these two regiments totaled 472 soldiers. In reserve, Webster held 84 jaeger riflemen and 50 light infantrymen of the Guards. Brigadier General Charles O’ Hara’s 250-man command, which included the 2nd Battalion of Guards and the Guard’s grenadiers (elite infantrymen), was also instructed to support Webster. Tarleton’s 272 dragoons and the royal artillery were directed to advance up New Garden Road behind the main line. In its initial deployment, the British line measured about 1,000 yards in length; roughly 300 yards shorter than the American front. “However, when the reserves moved up,” as one historian has noted, “the line expanded to slightly overlap the rebels.”⁹⁹

The First Line

Cornwallis launched his attack around one o’clock in the afternoon. With fixed bayonets, the British troops marched eastward in precise formation across Hoskins’ cornfields, methodically closing the 400-yard gap that intervened between them and the first American line.¹⁰⁰ Sergeant Roger Lamb, of the 23rd Regiment, recalled that the North Carolina militia “had their arms presented, and resting on a rail fence...They were taking aim with the nicest precision.” The sight of a thousand leveled barrels awed the British professionals, and as Lamb noted, “a general pause took place; both parties surveyed each other with a most anxious suspense.” Colonel Webster then rode to the front of the 23rd Regiment, shouting, “Come on, my brave Fuzileers [sic].” This exhortation was enough to inspire the redcoats to resume their advance.¹⁰¹ When they closed to within 140 yards, the fence line blazed with the fire from hundreds of North Carolina muskets.¹⁰² Sustaining light to moderate casualties down the line, the British dressed ranks, stepped over their fallen comrades, and pressed on with resolution.¹⁰³ Halting

⁹⁷ Showman, *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, vol. 7, 434; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 51.

⁹⁸ Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 374; Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 44-45.

⁹⁹ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 45; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 52-53.

¹⁰⁰ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 47.

¹⁰¹ Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal*, 361.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 350.

¹⁰³ Lee, *Memoirs*, 277; Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 375.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 25**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

about 50 yards before the Carolinians, the British discharged a volley of their own and then charged the fence.¹⁰⁴ A few militiamen managed to get off another shot, but the majority of them, in the center, beat a precipitate retreat, discarding their muskets and equipment as “they rushed like a torrent headlong through the woods.” Only a few militiamen from Eaton’s brigade held fast, attaching themselves to the command of Lee and Campbell on the American left.¹⁰⁵

When the center of the first line collapsed, the regulars and riflemen on its flanks remained in place, harrying the British troops with raking gunfire. To counter the threat posed by Lee and Campbell on the British right, Leslie brought up the 1st Battalion of Guards, placing them to the right of the Regiment von Bose. North of New Garden Road, the deadly enfilading fire of Lynch’s riflemen and Kirkwood’s Delaware Company compelled Colonel Webster to change the front of his 33rd Regiment to the left. Calling up the jaegers and light infantry of the guards, Webster soon pushed back the American right flank. The 2nd Battalion of guards and grenadiers, commanded by Brigadier O’ Hara, moved into the gap between the 23rd and 71st Regiments. With O’ Hara’s troops now in line, Cornwallis had committed the last of his infantry reserves. Only Tarleton’s dragoons and the royal artillery remained in the rear.¹⁰⁶

Before the British overran the fence, Captain Singleton had withdrawn his artillery to the third line and took up a position to the left of Ford’s 2nd Maryland.¹⁰⁷ On the American right, William Washington’s cavalry covered the commands of Kirkwood and Lynch as they retired through the woods, trailed by Webster’s troops. These three American units successfully reached the second line and positioned themselves, according to plan, on the right flank of the Virginians. Lee and Campbell, on the American left, were not so lucky. Becoming fiercely engaged with Norton’s 1st Guards and the Regiment von Bose, the legionnaires and riflemen deviated off course, heading southeast, and consequently missed their point of rendezvous with the second line’s left flank. The Guards and Hessians relentlessly pursued. Thus, these opposing units, detaching from the main lines of battle, essentially became embroiled in a separate engagement.¹⁰⁸

The Second Line

One scholar of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse has succinctly described the loss of cohesion suffered by the British army upon entering the woods beyond Hoskins’ fields:

As the redcoats drove through the first line, the forest that engulfed them accomplished what the North Carolina militia could not: It broke the British battle formations into fragments. Used to fighting shoulder-to-shoulder in a sort of hedgehog of bayonets, the British now found their ranks shattered as men scrambled through a maze of heavy forest and thick undergrowth along zigzag paths.¹⁰⁹

The dense woods did not conduce to formal eighteenth century linear tactics and the fighting on the second line soon degenerated into a series of “small units actions.”¹¹⁰

The British Commissary officer, Charles Stedman, reported that the Virginians were “[p]osted in the woods, and covering themselves with trees, they kept up for a considerable time a galling fire which did

¹⁰⁴ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 54.

¹⁰⁵ Lee, *Memoirs*, 277-278.

¹⁰⁶ Cornwallis to Germain, in Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 305.

¹⁰⁷ Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 273.

¹⁰⁸ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 55.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 26**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

great execution.”¹¹¹ This was especially true on the British left. As the Hessians and the 1st Guards, caught up in their own private battle with Lee, moved steadily off to the southeast, Brigadier Leslie elected to move up the 71st Regiment of Highlanders.¹¹² Practically alone, the 71st soon became engaged in a hot fire fight with Stevens’ brigade of Virginia militia. Stevens’ militia resisted firmly, causing the Highlanders to lag behind the main British line.¹¹³

The British achieved more sweeping successes on their left. Here, the 2nd Guards and the 33rd Regiment plowed through Lawson’s brigade.¹¹⁴ According to one American officer, two militia regiments in this quarter, finding the British in their rear, “instantly broke without firing a single gun, and dispersed like sheep frightened by dogs.”¹¹⁵ Deploring the behavior of these Virginians, Major William Richardson Davie, the American Commissary General, sardonically remarked, “Lawson’s Brigade fought as illy [sic] as the No[rth] Carolinians. The only difference was they did not run entirely home.”¹¹⁶

While the 33rd and 2nd Guards steadily brushed aside the opposition, the regiment between them, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (the 23rd), got held up by a detachment of tenacious Virginians who were stationed behind a natural barrier of brushwood. Sir Thomas Saumarez, an officer with the Fusiliers, described the 23rd Regiment’s attempt to dislodge these Virginians:

Not being able to attack in front, the Fusiliers were obliged to take the ground to their left to get clear of the brushwood. They then attacked the enemy with the bayonet in so cool and deliberate a manner as to throw the Americans into the greatest confusion and disperse them.¹¹⁷

As a testament to the confused nature of the fighting in this sector, Sergeant Lamb found Cornwallis, mounted on a dragoon’s horse (his own steed having been shot out from under him), riding perilously close to a concealed party of Virginia militiamen. Lamb related that “the saddle-bags” of Cornwallis’ new mount “were under the creature’s belly, which much retarded his progress, owing to the vast quantity of underwood [sic] that was spread over the ground; his lordship was evidently unconscious of his danger.” The sergeant dutifully grabbed the horse’s bridle and led Cornwallis back to the Fusiliers.¹¹⁸

After battling with the jaeger rifleman and Guards’ light infantry, the American right flank--consisting of Lynch’s riflemen, Kirkwood’s Delaware Company, and Washington’s cavalry--fell back to take up their third and final position on the right of the third line. Lee and Campbell, on the other hand, remained intensely embroiled in their isolated battle with Norton’s 1st Battalion of Guards and the Hessians under Dubuy. In this sector of the battlefield, Cornwallis related, “[t]he excessive thickness of the woods rendered our bayonets of little use, and enabled the broken enemy, to make frequent stands, with an irregular fire, which occasioned some loss.” At times, Cornwallis continued, the Hessians and Guards “were warmly engaged in front, flank, and rear.”¹¹⁹ At one point, a contingent of Virginia militia broke

¹¹¹ Charles Stedman, *The History of the Origin, Progress, and Termination of the American War*, vol. 2 (London: 1794, reprint, The Arno Press, 1969), 339.

¹¹² Lee, *Memoirs*, 278.

¹¹³ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 58.

¹¹⁴ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 59.

¹¹⁵ This quote, by St. George Tucker, appears in Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 141.

¹¹⁶ Blackwell P. Robison, ed., *The Revolutionary War Sketches of William R. Davie* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1976), 31.

¹¹⁷ Quoted in Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 58.

¹¹⁸ Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal*, 361-362.

¹¹⁹ Cornwallis to Germain, in Tarleton, *Campaigns*, 305-306.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 27**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

off from the second line and attacked the 1st Guards. Samuel Houston, a member of this band of Virginians, stated, “We fired on their flank and that brought down many of them.” These Virginians, Houston went on to report, pursued the Guards for a considerable distance before turning back.¹²⁰ Surviving the attack of the Virginians, the Guards pressed on and found a line of Lee’s troops atop a wooded height. The Guards took the high ground, but suffered heavy casualties in the process. Shortly after they gained the summit, another irregular line of Americans materialized and opened fire on them.

At this “period of the action[,] the first battalion of guards was completely broken,” admitted Charles Stedman. Only the timely arrival of the Hessians saved them from sure annihilation. Reinforced by the Hessians, Norton’s Guards soon recovered and the two regiments advanced in tandem. Nevertheless, as Stedman related, the advantage in the fighting continued to oscillate back and forth: “No sooner had the guards and Hessians defeated the enemy in front, than they found it necessary to return and attack another body of them that appeared in the rear.”¹²¹

The Third Line

Having broken through Lawson’s Virginians, Lieutenant Colonel Webster’s 33rd Regiment, the green-coated jaegers, and the light infantry of the Guards were the first British troops to reach the open ground before the third American line. Determined to crush the American right flank, Webster impetuously ordered an attack without waiting for the support of the remaining British regiments which were still engaged in the woods. The redoubtable Colonel led his three units across the ravine and up the western slope of the elevation toward Kirkwood’s Delaware Company, Lynch’s riflemen, and the Virginia continentals.¹²² The Americans held their fire until the British were nearly upon them and then unleashed a shattering volley that sent Webster’s men recoiling back across the ravine to their former position. Webster, who received a musket ball in the knee, was one of many casualties suffered by the British in the ill-advised attack. The Colonel later died as a result of the wound.¹²³

Before Webster was felled in the action on the American third line, Brigadier Charles O’ Hara of the 2nd Guards suffered two grievous wounds while battling through the first and second American lines. Command of the Guards then devolved on Lieutenant Colonel James Stuart, an officer whose own élan and impulsiveness matched Webster’s.¹²⁴

Shortly after the American right repulsed Webster’s command, the 2nd Guards broke from the woods, just north of New Garden Road. Seeing the left flank of the third American line before him, Stuart instantly attacked. “Glowing with impatience to signalize themselves,”¹²⁵ the Guards surged across the clearing toward Ford’s 2nd Maryland and the two six-pounders that Captain Singleton had withdrawn from the first line. The raw recruits of the 2nd Maryland fired one ineffectual volley and then fled the field in a panic, abandoning the two cannon to the oncoming Guards. Once they overran the guns, the Guards continued to pursue the discomfited Marylanders into the woods behind the third line.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical*, 144.

¹²¹ Stedman, *The History of the...American War*, vol. 2, 342-343.

¹²² William Seymour, *A Journal of the Southern Expedition, 1780-1783* (Wilmington: Historical Society of Delaware, 1896), 20-21.

¹²³ Stedman, *The History of the...American War*, vol. 2, 339-340; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 64, 78.

¹²⁴ Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 378.

¹²⁵ Cornwallis to Germain, in Tarleton, *Campaigns of 1780 and 1781*, 306.

¹²⁶ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 75-76.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 28

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

At this point, Greene was in a perilous position. The 2nd Guards had routed his left flank, captured two pieces of artillery, and were now threatening his rear. If the other British regiments gained the clearing and joined the attack, he risked the destruction of his army. Consequently, the American general “thought it advisable [sic] to order a retreat.”¹²⁷ However, as one historian has noted, “the fighting was now out of Greene’s hands and was being directed by individual unit commanders, some of whom were not yet ready to admit defeat.”¹²⁸

Colonel John Gunby, commander of the 1st Maryland, was unaware of the predicament on his left--a screen of trees had obstructed his view of the 2nd Maryland’s disintegration. Informed by a staff officer that the British were pushing into the 1st Maryland’s rear, Lieutenant Colonel John Eager Howard, Gunby’s second in command, instantly alerted his superior to the danger.¹²⁹ Howard later recounted:

[Gunby] did not hesitate to order the regiment to face about, and we were immediately engaged with the guards. Our men gave them some well directed fires, and we then advanced and continued firing.¹³⁰

As the 1st Maryland moved against Stuart’s left, Gunby’s horse was shot, pinning the Colonel beneath it. Howard then took command, ordering a charge just as William Washington’s cavalry, which had ridden over (behind the American lines) from its position on the right, smashed through the front of Stuart’s line. Washington’s troopers charged with such ferocity that their momentum carried them straight through the British ranks.¹³¹ The horsemen then halted, turned around, and barreled through the 2nd Guard’s yet again, striking down many with their sabers as they passed. One of Washington’s most imposing troopers was Peter Francisco, a Virginian of Spanish stock. Francisco, who stood six and a one-half feet tall and weighed about 260 pounds, was dubbed the “Virginia giant” by contemporaries. Wielding a five-foot long broadsword at Guilford Court House, the “giant” reportedly cut down eleven guardsmen before being incapacitated by a bayonet wound to the leg.¹³²

No sooner had the Guards sustained Washington’s second shock, than they were struck on the left by the veteran 1st Maryland. Watching the action from the Court House, Nathaniel Slade--a North Carolinian who had rallied at the county seat along with about 500 other militiamen¹³³--observed:

...this conflict between the brigade of guards and the first regiment of Marylanders, was most terrific; for they fired at the same instant, and they had approached so near that the blazes from the muzzles seemed to meet.¹³⁴

The opposing units then locked into a savage hand-to-hand struggle. Howard’s men, assisted by Washington’s cavalry, steadily drove the Guards back and recaptured Singleton’s guns. As the mêlée escalated in fury, a captain of the 1st Maryland fatally cut down Colonel Stuart. Many other guardsmen

¹²⁷ Showman, *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, vol. 7, 435.

¹²⁸ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 65.

¹²⁹ Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 378.

¹³⁰ John Eager Howard to [Bayard?], not dated., Bayard Papers, Manuscript 109, Maryland Historical Society.

¹³¹ Past historians have erroneously written that William Washington’s cavalry took up a position on the American left flank, south of the 2nd Maryland, sometime before the action commenced on the third line.

This error has led many scholars to assert that Washington’s men struck the Guards from the rear, as opposed to the front. Thomas E. Baker, personal communicant.

¹³² Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 66-67.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹³⁴ Caruthers, Eli Washington, *Revolutionary Incidents: And Sketches of Character, Chiefly in the “Old North State”*, 2nd ser. (Philadelphia, 1856), 118.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 29**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

met with their commander's fate as Washington's hammer pounded them against the anvil of the 1st Maryland.¹³⁵

Observing the desperate action from an elevation near the western edge of the clearing, Cornwallis made a dire yet expedient decision. In spite of Brigadier O' Hara's protest, Cornwallis ordered Lieutenant MacLeod, who had just reached the front with his two three-pounders, to fire charges of canister down into the morass of blue and redcoats. The artillery fire, which killed Guards and continentals alike, achieved its desired result; for the canister broke the American attack, allowing the mauled Guards to limp back to the British lines.¹³⁶

As the 1st Maryland and Washington's troopers fell back, the 71st and 23rd British regiments finally cleared the tree line. The 71st (Highlanders), which emerged first, came out of the woods to the south of New Garden Road. The Fusiliers soon followed, filtering into the clearing north of the highway. Brigadier O' Hara, although suffering from his two wounds, succeeded in rallying the nearly routed 2nd Guards. O' Hara's troops, which included the grenadiers, then fell in between the Highlanders and the Fusiliers.¹³⁷

Around the time that Colonel Howard (of the 1st Maryland) caught sight of the additional British regiments, he learned that Greene had ordered a general retreat.¹³⁸ Howard then led the 1st Maryland toward the Reedy Fork Road with Washington's cavalry trailing closely behind. Green's Virginia Regiment had already withdrawn to cover the retreat and only Hawes' Virginia Regiment--under the immediate direction of General Huger, commander of the Virginia Brigade--remained in line on the American right.¹³⁹

Despite his life-threatening wound, Webster managed to reorganize his exhausted units on the British left and ordered a final attack. Once again, Webster's troops advanced across the ravine, only to be repelled by Huger's men as they withdrew from the field to join the main retreat.¹⁴⁰ As General Greene wrote, "Huger was the last that was engaged and gave the enemy a check."¹⁴¹

Since most of the American artillery horses were killed before the retreat commenced, Greene had to leave his four six-pounders on the field. As the Americans retired, Cornwallis sent the 71st and 23rd, with a detachment of Tarleton's cavalry, in pursuit. The British General then dispatched Tarleton himself with the rest of the dragoons to the far British right where Norton's Guards were disengaging from the isolated battle in an effort to rejoin the main British army.¹⁴² Lee, following suit, led his Legion and some of Campbell's riflemen around Cornwallis' right flank to the Court House, only to find that Greene had already retreated.¹⁴³ The Legion commander then put his troops on the road and later rejoined Greene.

¹³⁵ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 67-69.

¹³⁶ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 82; Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 183.

¹³⁷ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 83; Stedman, *The History of the...American War*, vol. 2, 340.

¹³⁸ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 70; Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 82.

¹³⁹ Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 83.

¹⁴⁰ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 70-71.

¹⁴¹ Showman, *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, vol. 7, 435.

¹⁴² Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 85.

¹⁴³ Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 183.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 30**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Meanwhile, Campbell and his remaining troops, which included a party of Virginia militiamen, were left alone to face the Hessians and Tarleton's cavalry. The Regiment von Bose maintained a heavy fire against Campbell's isolated command and when Tarleton arrived his troopers overran their position. As Samuel Houston wrote afterwards:

...their light horse came on us, and not being defended by our own light horse, nor reinforced,--though firing was long ceased in all other parts, we were obliged to run, and many were sore chased and some cut down.¹⁴⁴

Houston's party managed to escape and met up with other straggling bodies of men as they made their way up Reedy Fork Road toward the main American army.¹⁴⁵ Campbell, on the other hand, was so incensed by Lee's early departure that he left the army a few days later.¹⁴⁶

With the final dispersal of Campbell's men, which occurred about 3:30 p.m., the Battle of Guilford Court House came to a close. Cornwallis' exhausted soldiers, who had spent the better part of two hours battling through three American lines, made only a half-hearted pursuit. Greene's army, still intact, retired in good order and reached the Speedwell Ironworks on Troublesome Creek (located about 18 miles north of Guilford Court House) at dawn on 16 March. Fully expecting an attack, Greene directed his soldiers to dig trenches. However, Cornwallis' victorious, albeit battered, army was in no shape to renew the contest.¹⁴⁷ As one historian has observed, "Greene had damaged Cornwallis so badly that the British command was no longer capable of acting offensively."¹⁴⁸ The British army remained on the field for two days, burying the dead and tending to the wounded, and then retreated toward the North Carolina coast.

Conclusion

Cornwallis had attacked and defeated a numerically superior American army deployed in a prepared position. While this was certainly an impressive accomplishment, the British commander had little to show for his army's prodigious effort. When news of Cornwallis' Pyrrhic victory at Guilford Court House reached London, the renowned Parliamentary orator, Charles James Fox, lamented, "Another such victory would ruin the British Army."¹⁴⁹

In terms of British manpower, the cost of driving Greene's army from the field was quite prohibitive. Although the British captured four cannons, 1,300 small arms, and a modicum of American prisoners, they suffered 93 killed, 413 wounded, and listed 26 soldiers as missing. Altogether these casualties totaled 532 men, or 27% of the 1,924 redcoats engaged. The battle took a particularly heavy toll on the British officer corps: 29 out of the army's 100 officers were either killed or wounded.¹⁵⁰

Comparatively, Greene's army suffered a much lighter burden of casualties. The American general reported 79 killed, 185 wounded, and a significant number of missing. These missing, however, were militiamen who either went home or later rejoined the army. Thus historians have generally subtracted

¹⁴⁴ Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical*, 144.

¹⁴⁵ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 75.

¹⁴⁶ Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 185.

¹⁴⁷ Cornwallis to Germain, in Tarleton, *Campaigns*, 307; Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 74-75.

¹⁴⁸ Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 186.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Hatch, *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*, 145.

¹⁵⁰ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 76-77.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 31

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

their number from the total American casualties, which amounted to 264 soldiers or 6% of the 4,400 troops engaged.¹⁵¹

Ironically, the British army was more crippled in victory than Greene was in defeat. Having lost more than one-fourth of his total command, Cornwallis decided to abandon his design to reconquer North Carolina and marched his army toward the British-controlled port of Wilmington. This retreat to the coast, coupled with the fact that Cornwallis had failed to destroy or even materially damage Greene's army, turned the British general's tactical victory at Guilford Court House into a broader strategic defeat for the British.

As the British army withdrew toward Wilmington, Cornwallis was dismayed by the cool reception he received from the area loyalists. While encamped near Bell's Mill on the Deep River, a decidedly frustrated Cornwallis wrote:

Many inhabitants rode into camp, shook me by the hand, said they were glad to see us and to hear we had beat Greene, *and then rode home again*. I could not get 100 men...to stay with us even as militia.¹⁵²

Certainly, the sight of Cornwallis' bedraggled redcoats, followed by ambulance wagons laden with wounded men, served to dissuade many loyalists from flocking to the king's standard.¹⁵³

The British army reached Wilmington on 7 April 1781. After eighteen days of recuperation, Cornwallis marched his army north into Virginia, believing that a decisive British victory in the Old Dominion would catalyze the collapse of American resistance.¹⁵⁴ However, combined French and American forces trapped and then besieged Cornwallis, whose army had been bolstered to 8,000-strong, at the Virginia hamlet of Yorktown. Unable to break the siege, Cornwallis surrendered his army on 19 October 1781.¹⁵⁵ While the war would not officially end until 1783, the devastating defeat at Yorktown essentially sealed the British fate in America.¹⁵⁶

Following the Battle of Guilford Court House, Greene shadowed Cornwallis' retreating army for nearly two weeks and then led his forces south to contest the British troops that remained in South Carolina. Before Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Greene fought four pitched battles in South Carolina, all of which he technically lost. After each defeat, however, he refused to relinquish the offensive. Attesting to his own tenacity, the winless General declared, "We fight, get beat, rise, and fight again."¹⁵⁷ Greene's persistence ultimately forced the British to abandon their outposts in the Carolina interior and by the end of the summer of 1781, the king's soldiers controlled only the ports of Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah in South.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 78.

¹⁵² Quoted in Sir Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782*, edited by William B. Willcox (New Haven, 1954), 508.

¹⁵³ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 82.

¹⁵⁴ Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 190.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 229-230.

¹⁵⁶ Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence*, 382-383.

¹⁵⁷ Greene, *The Life of Nathanael Greene*, vol. 3, 253.

¹⁵⁸ Baker, *Another Such Victory*, 85; Pancake, *This Destructive War*, 221.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 32

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baker, Thomas E. *Another Such Victory*, 1998 printing. Eastern National, 1981.

_____. *The Monuments at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park*. No publisher listed, 1979.

_____. *Redeemed From Oblivion: An Administrative History of Guilford Courthouse National Military Park*. National Park Service, 1995.

Brandon, William P. "The Tarleton Map of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse: A Critical Study." Unpublished manuscript (typewritten), 1938. In File A-11 at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park.

Crayon, Porte (David Hunter Strother). *The Old South Illustrated*. Edited by Cecil D. Eby, Jr. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959.

Clark, Walter, ed. *The State Records of North Carolina*. 26 vols. Raleigh: P. M. Hale, 1886-1907.

Davie, William R. *The Revolutionary War Sketches of William R. Davie*. Edited by Blackwell P. Robison. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1976.

Foote, William Henry. *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856.

Greene, George Washington. *The Life of Nathanael Greene*. 3 vols. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1897.

Hatch, Charles E., Jr. *The Battle of Guilford Courthouse*. Washington, D. C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1971.

_____. *Guilford Courthouse and Its Environs*. Washington, DC.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1970.

Higginbotham, Don. *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1971. Reprint, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983.

Lamb, Roger. *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences During the Late American War*. Dublin: Wilkinson & Courtney, 1809. Reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1968.

Lee, Henry. *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States*. New York: University Publishing Co., 1869.

Lossing, Benson J. *Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution*. 2 vols. New York: Harper Brothers, 1860.

Lumpkin, Henry. *From Savannah to Yorktown: The American Revolution in the South*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD**Page 33**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

- Pancake, John S. *This Destructive War: The British Campaign in the Carolinas, 1780-1782*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1985.
- Schenck, David. *A Memorial Volume of the Guilford Battle Ground Company*. Greensboro, N. C.: Power Job Printers, 1893.
- Seymour, William. *A Journal of the Southern Expedition, 1780-1783*. Wilmington: Historical Society of Delaware, 1896.
- Showman, Richard K, ed. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*. 8 vols. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-1995.
- Stedman, Charles. *The History of the Origin, Progress, and Termination of the American War*. 2 vols. London: 1794. Reprint, New York: The Arno Press, 1969.
- Tarleton, Banastre. *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781 in the Southern Provinces of North America*. London: T. Cadell, 1787. Reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1968.
- Ward, Trawick and Joffre L. Coe. *Archaeological Investigations at the Site of Guilford Courthouse*. Unpublished report. Prepared by the Research Laboratories of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1976. Copy in files at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Guilford Courthouse National Military Park - 1966**
- Hoskins House Historic District - 1988**
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other(Specify Repository): Files at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park; Southeast Archeological Center, National Park Service, Tallahassee, Florida

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 319 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Northing	Easting	Zone	Northing	Easting	
A	17	3998740	603100	B	17	3999460	603960
C	17	3999480	604710	D	17	3103999	605040
E	17	3999040	605040	F	17	3997880	604640
G	17	3997800	604310	H	17	3998450	603400

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the point where State Route 220 intersects with State Route 2179 on the southeast corner of said roads (UTM reference point A); proceed east approximately 600 feet to a small side road; then proceed south from State Route 2179 approximately 200 feet; then east approximately 800 feet; then proceed north approximately 200 feet, back to State Route 2179. Then proceed east approximately 150 feet along State Route 2179. At this point proceed north approximately 500 feet; then east approximately 500 feet; then north approximately 100 feet; then east, along a slight curve for approximately 3800 feet, then slightly southeast for approximately 800 feet to UTM reference point D. From point D proceed approximately 600 feet to UTM reference point E. From point E proceed west approximately 800 feet, then proceed south approximately 500 feet; then proceed west approximately 500 feet along the north face of a small dam until it intersects with a road on the west side of a small lake. Then proceed south approximately 3200 feet along this road and beyond the road to UTM reference point F. From reference point F proceed in a westerly direction approximately 1000 feet to UTM reference point G. From reference point G proceed in a northerly direction approximately 1100 feet until it intersects with the edge of a modern cemetery. From here proceed in a northerly direction for approximately 2200 feet along the east side of the modern cemetery. At this point proceed west approximately 1800 feet along the north side of the modern cemetery until it intersects with State Route 2340. Then proceed south approximately 1000 feet along State Route 2340. At this point proceed due west approximately 1500 feet until it intersects with State Route 220 at UTM reference point H. From reference point H, proceed in a northwesterly direction along the east side of State Route 220 for approximately 200 feet, then proceed due east approximately 1000 feet, then proceed due north approximately 200 feet and then west for approximately 1000 feet until an intersection with State Route 220. Proceed along the east side of State Route 220 for approximately 900 feet until intersection with UTM reference point A which is the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the Guilford Court House Battlefield includes the staging area of the British forces around the Hoskins House, and large segments of three American lines, centered on the Old Garden Road, through which the British attacked, along with the site of the small community of Guilford Court House. The boundary is based upon historic maps, manuscripts, archeological investigations, and other documentation both primary and secondary.

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 35

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: John Hiatt, Intern/M. A. Candidate, University of North
Carolina at Greensboro

Org.: Guilford Courthouse National Military Park

Street/#: 2332 New Garden Road

City/Town: Greensboro

State: North Carolina

ZIP: 27510

Telephone: (336)288-1776

Date: 5 January 1999

Additional assistance provided by Mr. Thomas E. Baker, Historian (former), Guilford Courthouse National Military Park and Mark Barnes, Ph.D., Archeologist, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service.

Edited by: Patty Henry
National Park Service
National Historic Landmarks Survey
1849 C Street, NW
Room NC-400
Washington, DC 20240

Telephone: 202-343-8163

GUILFORD COURT HOUSE BATTLEFIELD

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
